

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-01 EUR-12 PM-05

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 ACDA-12 IO-13 /108 W

-----101174 231112Z /21/70

R 221150Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6887

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

S E C R E T KHARTOUM 1283

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1. CORRECTED)

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, ET, SU, PFOR

SUBJECT: SUDANESE INTELLIGENCE RE ETHIOPIAN DEVELOPMENTS

1. MORNING MARCH 22 I CALLED ON DR. BAHA AL DIN MUHAMMED IDRIS, MINISTER OF STATE FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS, TO DISCUSS A NUMBER OF PENDING MATTERS.

2. DR. BAHA SAID SUDANGOV HAD JUST RECEIVED TWO INTELLIGENCE REPORTS RE ETHIOPIA WHICH TROUBLED PRESIDENT GREATLY. THE FIRST WAS THAT SOVIETS WERE BUILDING TWO LARGE MILITARY AIRFIELDS IN ETHIOPIA. FIRST WAS LOCATED IN A PLACE WHERE IT WOULD PERMIT ETHIOPIANS FULL COVERAGE OF OGADEN. THE SECOND WAS IN THE "CAPITAL OF TIGRE PROVINCE" WHICH WOULD BE A DIRECT THREAT TO THE SUDAN.

3. SECOND REPORT, SAID DR. BAHA, INDICATED THAT MENGISTU WAS QUITE SICK AND THAT HE HAD BEEN TAKEN TO AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION OUTSIDE OF ETHIOPIA. LT. LAGESSE WAS NOW IN

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EFFECT IN CHARGE OF ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT. DR. BAHA SAID IT WAS HIS PERSONAL SPECULATION THAT THIS MEANT THE END OF MENGISTU AND THAT HE WOULD NEVER RETURN TO ETHIOPIA. SUDANESE HAD ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT LAGESSE IS SOVIET PUPPET AND THE RUSSIANS WERE NOW TAKING STEPS TO PUT HIM IN THE NUMBER ONE POSITION. I SAID I HAD SEEN REPORTS INDICATING THAT MENGISTU WAS INDEED SICK AND THAT HE HAD

GONE TO THE USSR FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT. THESE SAME REPORTS, HOWEVER, WENT ON TO STATE THAT MENGISTU HAD FIRM PLANS TO RETURN TO ETHIOPIA VIA A STOP IN EAST GERMANY.

4. DR. BAHA ASKED THAT WE REMAIN IN TOUCH ABOUT ETHIOPIAN DEVELOPMENTS AND I SAID THAT I WOULD BE HAPPY TO DO SO.
BERGUS

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NNN

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